

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

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*WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS*

# **HAWKEYE ATHLETICS**

## **FINAL PROJECT**

CHARITY AND NATALIE

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# OVERVIEW

The Iowa Women's Gymnastics social media accounts are described as welcoming, motivating, and fun.

They utilize each platform with a different purpose, Instagram being their most prominent, where they post fun and personality-filled pictures.

They use Twitter to show their personality through updates and short video clips.

The purpose of their accounts is to try and attract the attention of recruits and entice them to commit to the University of Iowa Gymnastics program, and for their audience from out of state or even country to receive updates on the team's performances.



## FOLLOWERS

5,233

*Twitter*

13.2 K

*Instagram*

6,660

*Facebook*

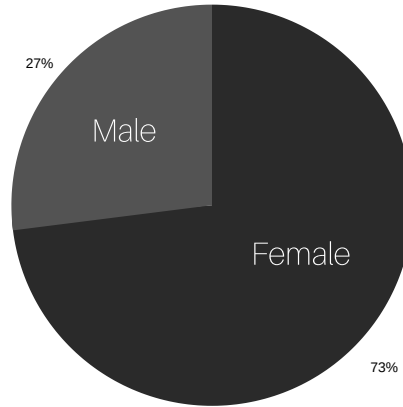
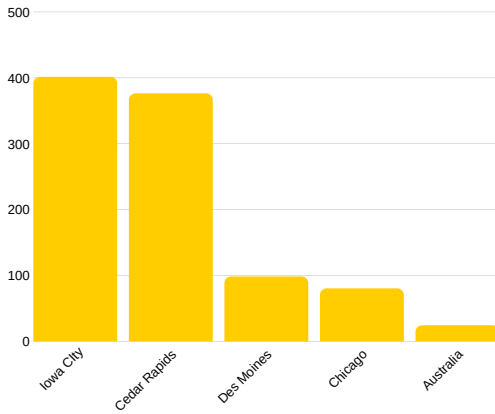
DATA COLLECTED ON 12/2/19



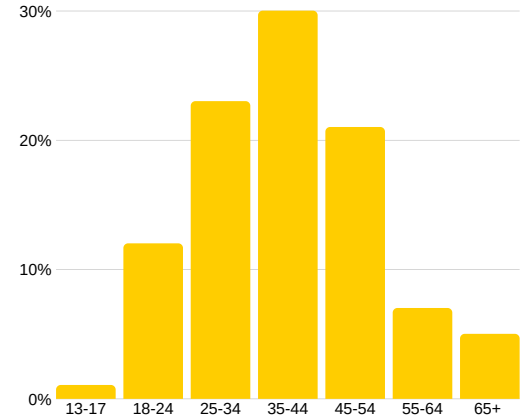
# FACEBOOK

Since 2009

Top Locations of Followers

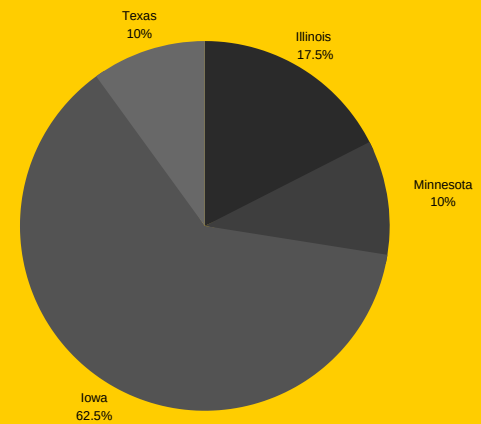
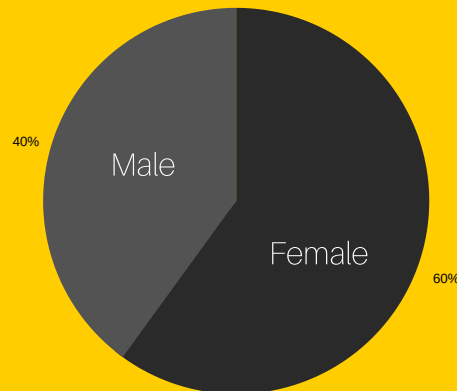
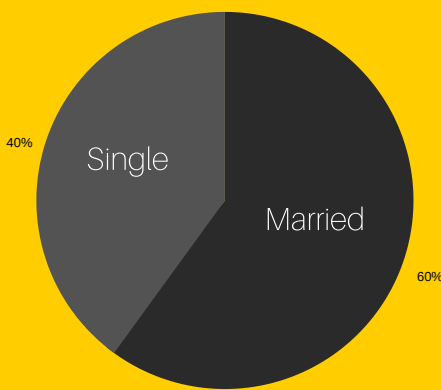


Age % of Followers



# TWITTER

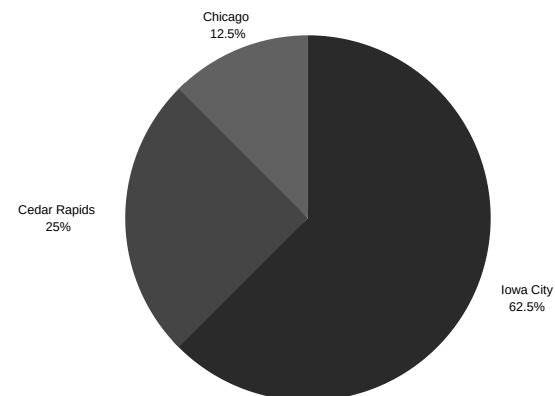
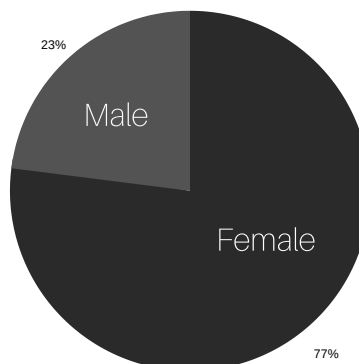
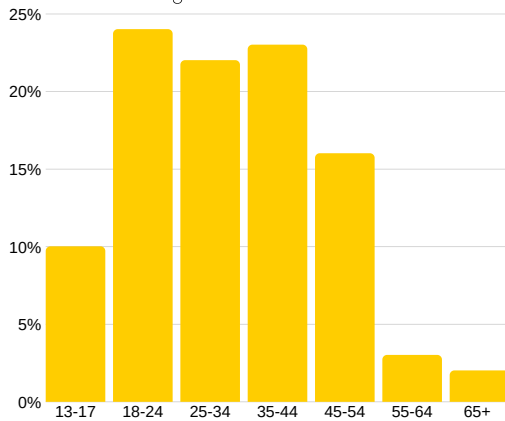
Since 2012



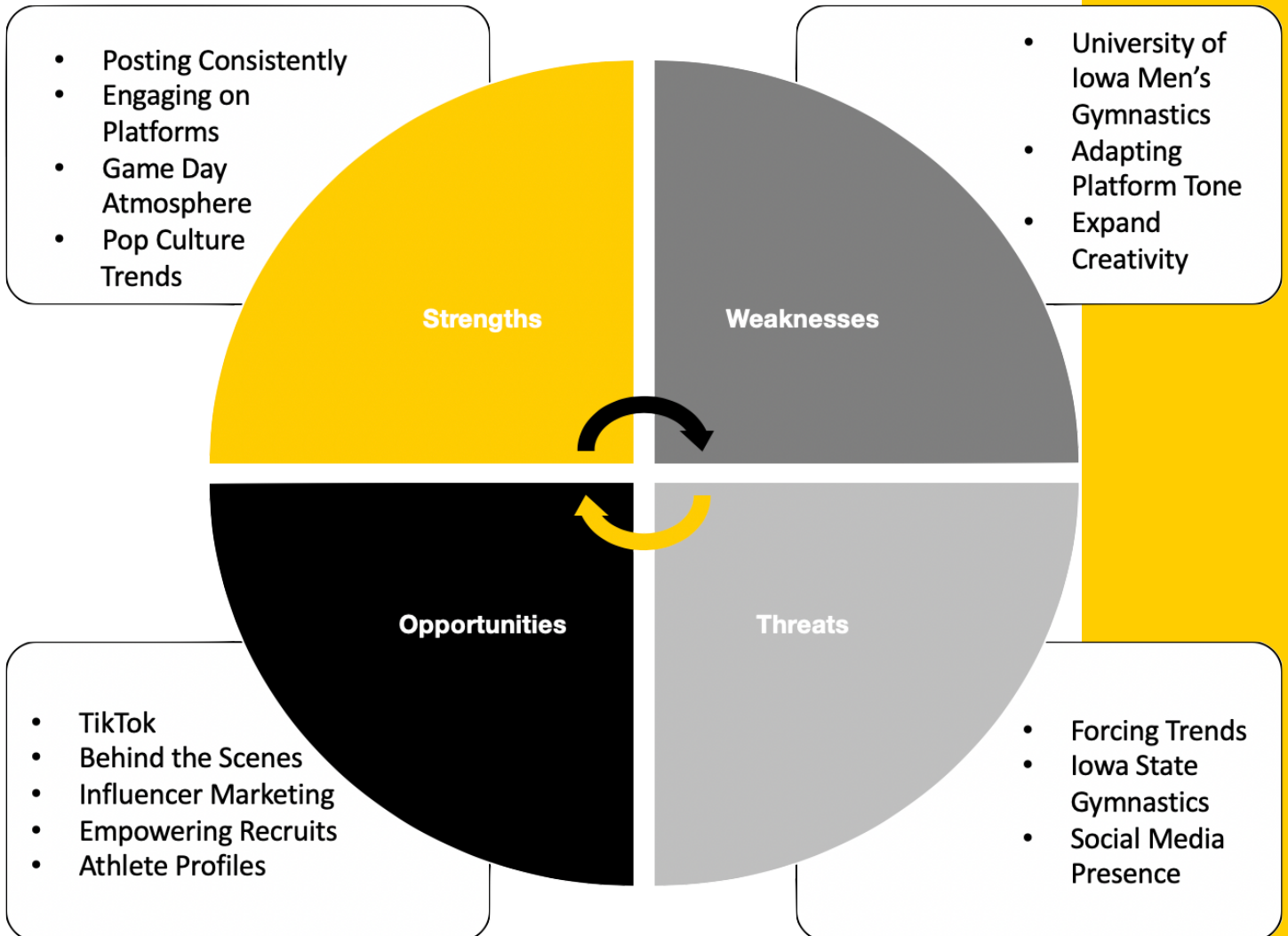
# INSTAGRAM

Since 2013

Age % of Followers



# SWOT ANALYSIS



# STRENGTHS

## Posting Consistently (Freberg, 195)

- Across all three platforms, the team posts about 19.4 times per week. This keeps them relevant and connected with their audience
- Posting an average of 3.25 times a week on Instagram seems to be the posting “sweet spot” for the audience. There is a significant larger amount of engagement here showing that this is a good amount to post to the audience

## Game Day Atmosphere

- NACMA #7 – “FOMO (fear of missing out) highlights young fans’ desires to never be excluded or miss out on doing something significant.” With the atmosphere provided during home meets creates FOMO for fans following along on team’s social media (NACMA, 2018).

## Engaging on Platforms

- Brand is consistent while engaging with different audiences on each platform (Benning, 2019).

## Pop Culture Trends

- Marketing team shows that they do a lot of social listening to stay up to date on trends of different platforms (Britt, 2019).
- “Understanding our audiences and what they are responding to the most (Freberg, 97).”

# WEAKNESS

## • University of Iowa Men’s Gymnastics

- If the two teams came together more they would be able to combine and grow both of their audiences. Doing this would make the platforms more gender neutral (Britt, 2019).

## • Adapting Platform Tone

- While the platforms do keep their brand consistent across all media, too often the same post is posted on multiple accounts (Benning, 2019).

## • Expand Creativity

- Based on our 12 month data collection the marketing team posted 58% of their posts for the year on Twitter. They should put an equal amount of effort in connecting with their audience on other platforms like they do on Twitter.





# OPPORTUNITIES

- **TikTok**

- On October 29, 2019, the marketing team decided to start investing time into TikTok. During the first 36 days on the platform they averaged, receiving 60 followers a day (reference page 15).

- **Behind the Scenes**

- NACMA #4 - "Today's fans are no longer exclusively interested in the content they're watching. Instead, they're using that content as a portal into the lives of those involved in an attempt to learn more and bolster their fandom with even stronger personal connections." Fans want to see what is happening during preparation periods and what student-athletes do outside of their sport.

- **Influencer Marketing**

- Social Media Trends for 2020 - Using multiple micro influencers (500 - 10,000 followers) will help focus on specific audiences, improve your engagement, minimize risks, and spend less for better returns. Having access to multiple student-athletes provides the opportunity to have them promote the organization by tagging the official gymnastics account.

- **Empowering Recruits**

- NACMA #6 - "Today, there is a strong emphasis on personal growth, fulfillment, and self-actualization, bolstered by the wide array of self-help content available today."

- On Instagram 10% of their followers are between ages 13 and 17, in a study conducted by the UCLA Brain Mapping Center, teens (ages 13 - 18) reward center of the brain are affected by activity on social media. The feeling of being "liked" and heard on the platforms are important influences on their social media use (PSYCOM, 2019).

- **Athlete Profiles**

- NACMA #9 - "The Internet and social media have given a home to every fan, regardless of location, allowing individuals the chance to support their fandom no matter where they are. (NACMA,2019).
- Having student-athletes and coaches from outside the country blurs geographical boundaries, 6.6% of total Facebook followers are from outside the United States (Facebook Insights, Dec.'19).

# THREATS

- **Forcing Trends**

- If you have to think hard about a trend then it probably wouldn't be efficient (Britt, 2019).

- **Iowa State Gymnastics**

- This is an in state rivalry, which leads a competition over in state audience for both teams.

- **Social Media Presence**

- Staff and student-athletes presence on social media may not align with Hawkeye values or NCAA guidelines (Taylor, 2019).

# 12 MONTH ANALYTIC REPORT

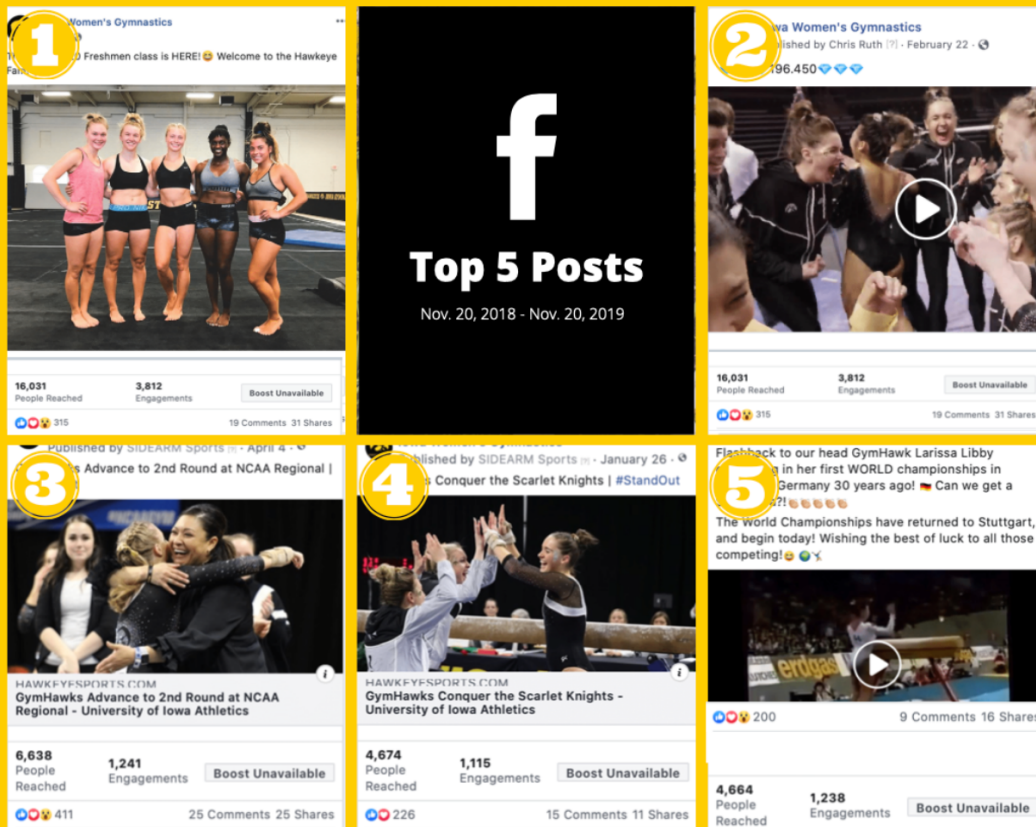
While collecting data from the last 12 months, there were numerous trends noticed in the metrics. One significant metric was the overall performance of the Instagram account.

Over the past year, the metrics continued to increase, specifically, throughout three months, they gained 500 followers.

These statistics indicate that Instagram has gained 407 more followers than Facebook and Twitter combined in the past three months.

The significant increase in Instagram followers was because “Fans want to learn more about the stories of individual players and intra-team dynamics as opposed to static information that does not string together a meaningful narrative”, this is the type of content they publish on Instagram (NACMA, 2018)



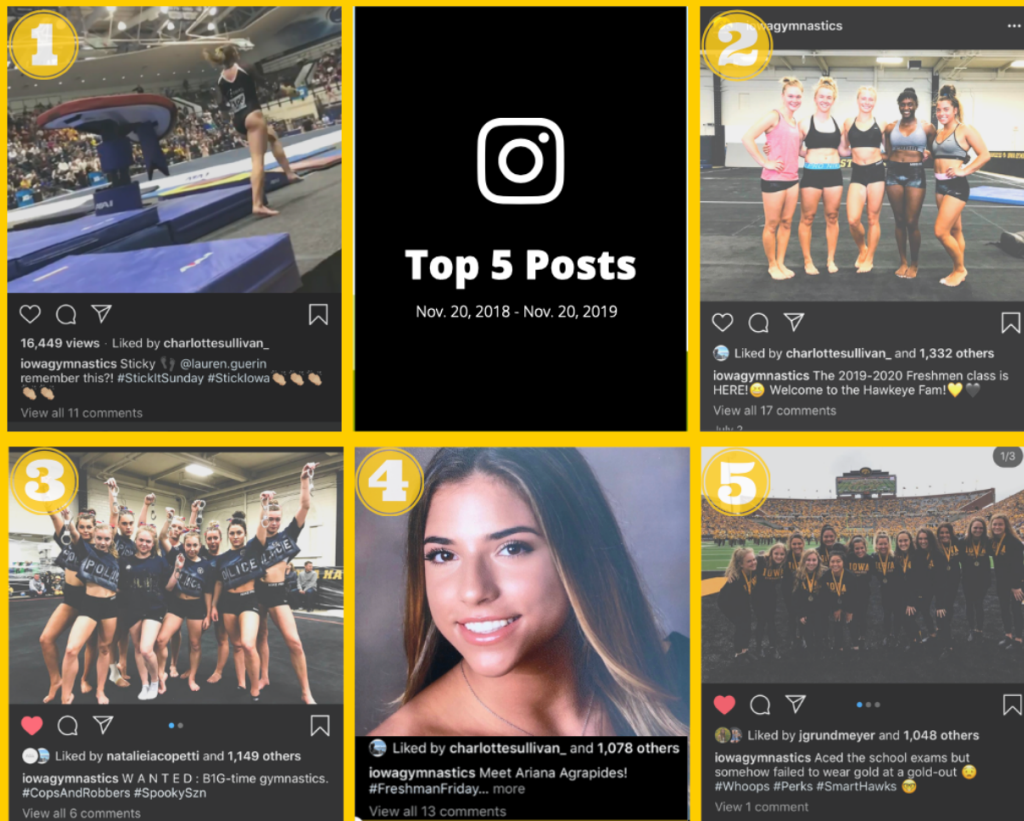


## TOP 5 POSTS



The type of post that performs the best on Facebook is meet recaps. These types of posts are presented in a couple of different ways: links to HawkeyeSports articles, video recaps, and graphic recaps. They normally post one the day of the meet and the day after the meet. This content performs very well on the platform, but the video recaps outperform the article shares. Recap posts contributed a total of 1,476 engagement to the top five posts in the past year. The video recap post was 55.5% of that contributed to engagement total. This information provides proof that the followers on the platform want to see informative posts on their feed.

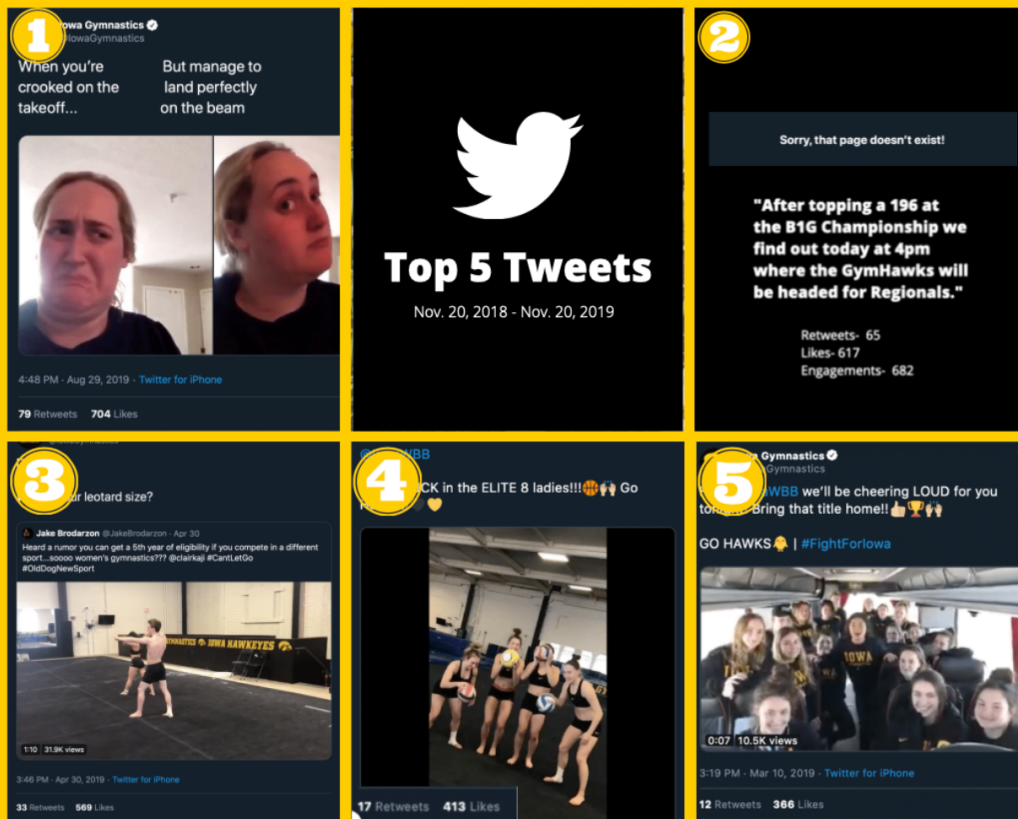




## TOP 5 POSTS



This platform performs the best out of the three platforms. Over two weeks (October 24 - November 6, 2019), Instagram accounted for 81% of their total gained followers, and overall, they account for 53% of total followers. The content that performs the best on this platform is behind the scene or “get to know” type posts. Their performance does not waver too much between the offseason and during the season because the content is more for brand awareness than information.



## TOP 5 POSTS



Twitter is the platform where the team expresses their fun personalities and post the most. On average, throughout the year, they posted about 11.35 times a week.

One thing they do well to engage with fans outside their loyal fan base is tag and interact with other Hawkeye sports like women's basketball and football. They love experimenting with posts on Twitter and keeping in touch with the pop culture that their followers will enjoy (reference post #1). Overall, four-fifths of their top five posts would be considered entertaining and what their audience wants to see.



# IDEA ENGINE 1

## GET READY LIKE A GYMHAWK (IGTV)

In June 2018, Instagram launched IGTV (Instagram TV), which allows users to create and post a video up to 10 minutes long. For more information on how to successfully implement IGTV in a marketing strategy, check this out: <https://youtu.be/EaRxgAW9mU>.

This idea could potentially be added simply to their social media routine, specifically on Instagram. "Get Ready With Me" would be posted on the 'story' platform and implemented more accessible with a schedule, but using the IGTV will allow them to post some more creative content that is going to engage recruits or fans.

The overall goal is to allow fans and their audience to receive behind the scenes footage and to learn what it takes to get ready for a meet.

It takes the very edited and "perfect" world of Instagram and turns it into a genuine and relatable platform.

*Based on the NACMA report, specifically #4; Fans are no longer only interested in the stats and team as a whole. They want to get to know the individual athletes and how they got to where they are.*

With this type of post, you would track the number of views, comments, and likes on Instagram TV post, or the Instagram Story promotion. If there are comments with positive comments or tagging other accounts, that would mean it was effective, and it should continue.

According to Later.com, "This can be a powerful way to raise awareness of your brand and products, while still sharing authentic and engaging content."





## IDEA ENGINE 2

### TIKTOK

TikTok is a new upcoming social platform that encourages creativity. 6-15 seconds and adding a sound are the essential elements of TikTok, adding captions, effects or hashtags can enhance the content.

The goal of a TikTok account would be to reinforce and build awareness of the team. Student-athletes could implement this idea by making hashtag challenges to allow users and fans to interact and create content within their brand.

This idea could be successful in working with the women's gymnastics team by creating a consistent engagement level. These videos could also be posted on Twitter because this is where the team likes to show their funny side.

By creating a TikTok account, a community will be built through the platform and will eventually start sharing the same content on all platforms.

This idea would align with the core value of Hawkeye Athletics, "Do It Right" by showing student-athletes engaging in outside activities maturely outside of the sport.

*According to Influencer Marketing Hub, hashtag challenges work because the users like to get involved and to create the content themselves. Gen Z, TikTok's demographic loves to be involved and the "full immersive experience" of TikTok.*

## TikTok Statistics

Start Date: 10/30/19

2,162 Followers

51.3k Likes

10 Videos



5,130 avg. like/video

60 avg. followers/day



## IDEA ENGINE 3

### "WE CAN" SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Creating a campaign to empower, connect, and impact young girls aligns perfectly with the Iowa Women's Gymnastics brand.

This campaign idea is to create videos of student-athletes doing things they were once told they'd never do. This idea comes from Sports England's "This Girl Can" campaign in 2015. In 2015 Forbes stated that it ("This Girl Can" Campaign) resonated with so many people because "they did not use models rather, they used real people (Fidelman, 2015)."

Along with the research from 2018 NACMA "What are Key Cultural Trends Influencing Today's College Sports Fans?" report, specifically number 6 – Individualism has made traditional "us vs. them" competition less significant. This trend/idea would resonate because people like to see the success, they have worked so hard for are a couple of reasons supporting why this plan would work.

This idea is to have fans contribute to a future video presented at a home meet. This would be spread out over all platforms with a focus on using Twitter. The best way to kick it off would be through a sit-down video with the student-athletes explaining how to contribute to the future video to be presented at a future meet.

The idea would be best implemented on Twitter by posting a video or photo along with a caption explaining some type of adversity the student-athlete had overcome (Reference Mock Post Page 17). The most important key performance indicator (KPI) to track for this platform would be how many comments are added. For Facebook, the best way to implement the concept is

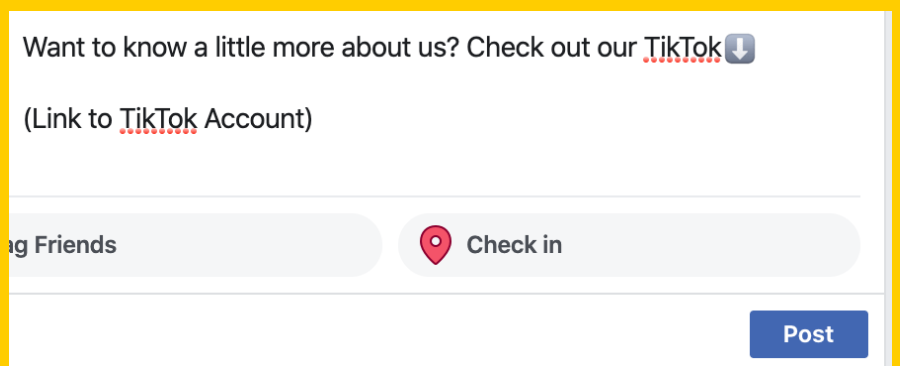
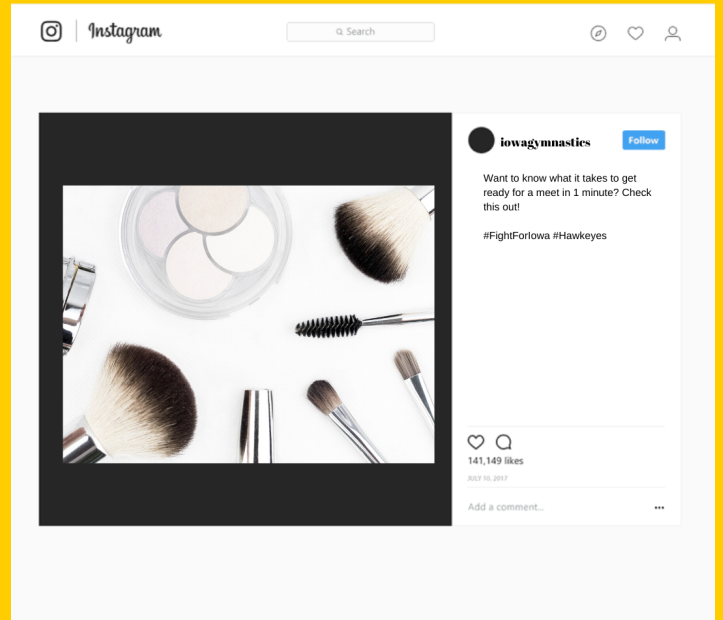
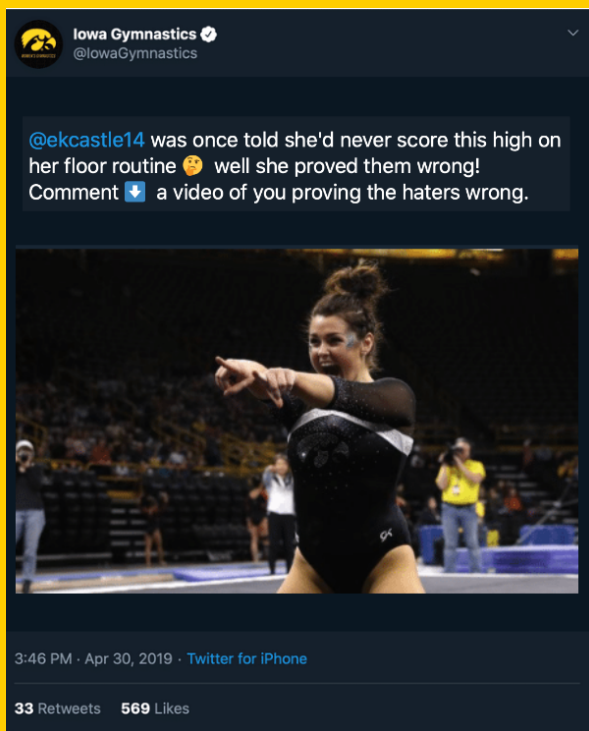
Overall, it would be very similar to Twitter with one key difference in attracting parents and getting them to post videos or photos of their children. The best way to also do this on Instagram would be to have them post the content then tagging @iowagymnastics. The KPI for this platform would be the number of tags with relevant content.

If the marketing team were to implement this, the next steps would be to:

1. Identify the best platform to push this on.
2. Identify key student-athletes and stories
3. Create introduction video
4. Launch campaign
5. Track KPI's



# MOCK POSTS



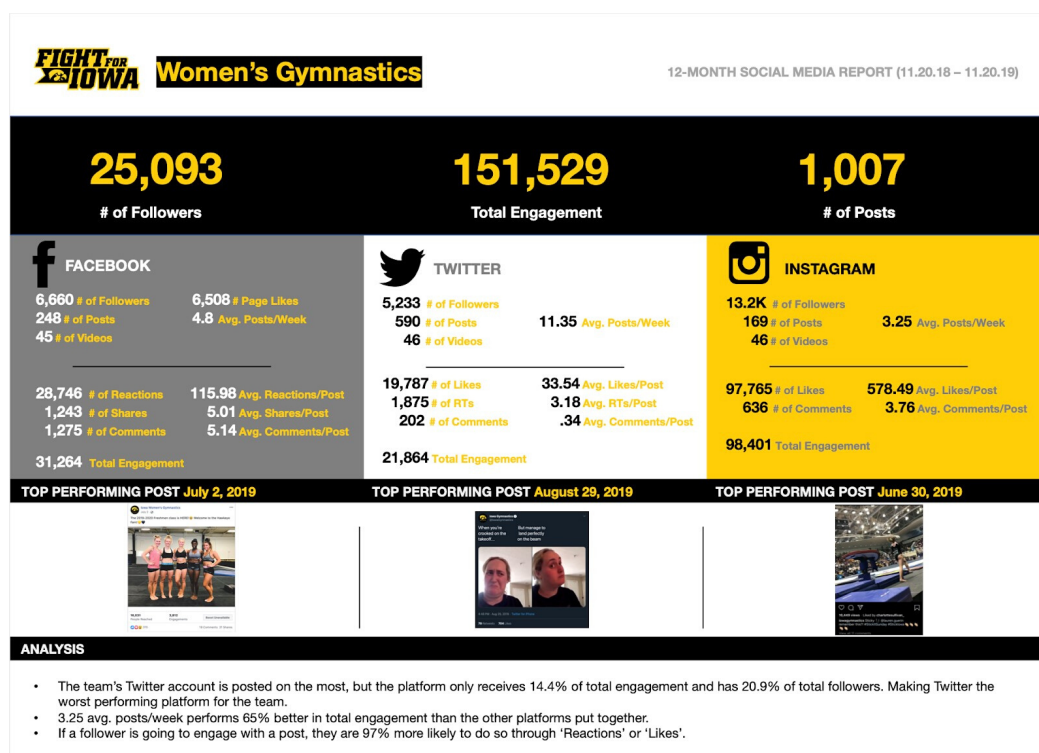


# Appendix

## Data Collection

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CkG5\\_OaAeomSL2H2kIg10KAh3sLsUnRIIu81FSsiZSo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CkG5_OaAeomSL2H2kIg10KAh3sLsUnRIIu81FSsiZSo/edit?usp=sharing)

## 12-Month Analytics Report



## Content Calendar

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z5WIK9C4yAwF2uehpIgkplO8x3\\_9\\_7904QaxigSmdUI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z5WIK9C4yAwF2uehpIgkplO8x3_9_7904QaxigSmdUI/edit?usp=sharing)

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# Charity Pettit

 (319)-327-7306

 [charity-pettit@uiowa.edu](mailto:charity-pettit@uiowa.edu)



# Natalie Iacopetti

 (847)-226-1145

 [natalie-iacopetti@uiowa.edu](mailto:natalie-iacopetti@uiowa.edu)